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ABSTRACT

This volume contributes to the understanding of higher education's catalytic role in shaping the microcomputer revolution. Academic computing is viewed here as a social and cultural phenomenon. An in-depth collection of mainly ethnographic studies of the academic computing revolution--its consequences, meanings, and significance--is presented. The contributions include several case studies that document the open-ended, socially constructed, interpretively flexible character of computer-mediated academic work. Drawing on the core ideas of cultural anthropology, interpretive sociology, and the social construction of technology, the volume is also a contribution to the growing multi-disciplinary study of technology and society. Titles include: (1) "The Social Construction of Academic Computing" (Mark A. Shields); (2) "Is Using a Computer Like Driving a Car, Reading a Book, or Solving a Problem? The Computer as Machine, Text, and Culture" (Peter Lyman); (3) "Paradoxical Reactions and Powerful Ideas: Educational Computing in a Department of Physics" (Sherry Turkle); (4) "Ideologies of Computerization" (William Graves, III); (5) "Stalking the Art Historian" (William O. Beeman); (6) "Computers and Pedagogy: The Invisible Presence" (Patrick McQuillan); (7) "To Move Away from Meaning: Collaboration, Consensus, and Work in a Hypermedia Project" (James M. Nyce and Gail Bader); (8) "The Social Ecology of Student Life: The Integration of Technological Innovations in a Residence Hall" (Kenneth T. Anderson, Anne Page McClard, and James Larkin); and (9) "The Legitimation of Academic Computing in the 1980s" (Mark A. Shields). The intended audience is educators and social scientists concerned with computing and technology studies, and academic administrators can benefit from this book by gaining an understanding of the sociocultural context of technological change as a basis for more informed decision making. (Contains 79 references.) (MAS)